



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

LITERARY CORRESPONDENCE.

I.

SOME distinguished foreigners have called my attention to the *Manuals of Moral and Civic Instruction* which circulate in our schools, thinking with reason that they mark perhaps the most important reform in public teaching. There have been published in France a dozen or more during the last ten years or so. The clerical party has thundered against these little books: it had good reason for alarm, for they aim at nothing less than to take the place of the catechism.

How do they replace it? What is their inferiority, or, what their advantages? What is their principle, their disposition? This can be sufficiently judged of by the five we have before us, signed by names more or less known, those of PAUL BERT, PIERRE LALOI, CHARLES BIGOT, MME. HENRY GREVILLE, and GABRIEL COMPAYRE.*

The manuals of MM. Paul Bert and Laloi, are models of style: the one in familiar, easy dialogues; the other in simple and clear precepts, set off and illustrated by pleasant stories. Lists of questions facilitate the use of the book by the master. The divisions or chapters relate to special subjects,—the military service, taxes, the fatherland, the parliament, the law, the government, etc. So much as to the form; let us look at the groundwork.

*Paul Bert, *L'Instruction civique à l'école*, Picard-Bernheim, Pub.; Pierre Laloi, *La première année d'instruction morale et civique*, Armand Colin, Pub.; Charles Bigot, *Le petit Français*, Weill et Maurice, Pub.; Mme. Henry Gréville, *Instruction morale et civique des jeunes filles*, Weil et Maurice, Pub.; Gabriel Compayré, *Eléments d'instruction morale et civique*, Paul Delaplane, Pub.

The catechism imparted general moral precepts which concerned the man, and particular commands which concerned the Christian. Our manuals also tend to form the man ; but in the man, above all, the good Frenchman. We find there glowing pages on the love of one's native land, and on the beauty of one's country, which we must love. Far be it from me to cast censure on this noble sentiment. Nevertheless, I do not think exaggeration on that point is desirable, lest we should seek a cause of patriotism even in the acknowledged superiority, from a gastronomic point of view, of the hare of France over the hare of Germany ! Our writers, undoubtedly, have too much tact to lay themselves open to this ridicule. It is very striking, though, that the notion of the moral man considered as a Frenchman, German, Englishman, or Italian, is narrower than that of the Christian man : this reversion into the folds of nationality is a characteristic phenomenon of our old world in this latter end of the century. If our encyclopædists had hit on the idea of writing a laic catechism, the tone of it would have been different. Our authors of to-day alas ! have only too much excuse to wish to form at first the *little Frenchman*, and to promote the reaction against a cosmopolitanism which had become dangerous to our national existence. They have done it, however, with sufficient caution, and without detriment to justice.

I shall not say as much for M. Paul Bert, in relation to his manual dedicated to the Revolution. Still here, undoubtedly, it is necessary to make allowance for the political necessities of the present time. But what a danger to sanctify at any cost the sanguinary epoch of our democracy ; what an error to date the French era from 1789, and to make our children believe that our fathers should have had hardly the sentiment of public virtue ! The worst is not that their young souls are thus embittered, but that their judgment on the facts of history is falsified. We are here only too much inclined to disregard the necessity of human evolution, and to imagine that it suffices to change the label of the sack to improve the merchandise. M. Bigot and M. Laloi, at least, have more wisdom, more prudence in this respect.

The ambition of the catechism, on another point, seems to go

beyond that of our manuals. It offered an explanation of the world, a complete conception of human destiny, in a word, a doctrine which *returns into itself*. This doctrine holds no longer, it is known nevertheless, and it is necessary now to replace it. Unfortunately scientific morality has not yet found its formula in a practical book, and the divergences of views are confessed in our manuals, where the conception of a fundamental ensemble almost entirely fails. It is sufficient to read the tables of contents to convince oneself of this. The work of M. Compayré, who addresses himself especially to the "middle and higher grades," changes suddenly in Book III. entitled *La Nature humaine et la morale*. What signifies the definition, that "morality is nothing more than the ensemble of the laws that nature has engraved in your soul before human legislators inscribed them in their codes"? What is doing here the vain affirmation of the existence of God and of the immortality of the soul, and this "let us contemplate and adore" which sums it up? In the mouth of M. Compayré it is only a concession and an avowal of infirmity. A frank spiritualist will resolutely establish his moral conception on his belief; but nominal deism causes God to play the rôle of an ignominious personage who has no longer a suitable occupation on the scene.

After all is said, however, our manuals have the advantage over the catechism in the clearness of their definitions (not all correct, it is true) and in the immediate value of the instruction. For example, M. Laloi gives information as to the placing out of money, reproduces the formulas in use in the ordinary acts of life, etc. I should take care not to blame, either this good practical sense, or this manner of instructing the child according to his capacity to understand himself and understand the world which surrounds him. In the modest articles of our little class-books, is found summed up, definitively, the secular experience of human societies, and this also has an aggregative value.

* * *

Numerous are the works written among us by distinguished authors to introduce youthful minds into the various sciences. The *Bibliothèque utile* already includes several, and among them one of

the best will always be the book of ADOLPHE COSTE, *La Richesse et le Bonheur*,* with which that library is about to enrich itself. M. Coste has reproduced here, in order to express them in a simple form, the doctrines expounded in his large works. But there is also contributed something new, as to what he calls property, for example. The *Manuals* of which I just spoke base all property on labor alone. Mme. Henry Gréville defines it "a right, based on the difficulty that any one has had in acquiring a thing." It would be proper to add—"and to save a thing," in taking account of the more exact analysis made by M. Coste. For if it is true that "consumable goods" are always due to labor in some manner, it is no less true that "productive capital," can only be acquired by putting a part of these goods outside of the current consumption, that is to say by saving something of that which one possesses. Saving is to-day the only regular source of accumulation of wealth; it is one of the indispensable factors of property. The usual definition sees only the other factor of wealth, labor, and opens thus the road to the dangerous sophism of which the workmen make a weapon, when they claim that they alone ought to possess, as they produce.

Let us quote the passage. It is exact. "By his labor man takes possession of the fruits, he enters into the enjoyment of his part of the product: this is in some sort only a personal right which disappears at once with consumption. But from the time that this man saves something from consumption and establishes capital, he becomes a proprietor, he acquires a social right. Fundamentally, property is the public acknowledgment of the service rendered to the community by the increase of the productive capital" (p. 25).

I will notice further, in the work of M. Coste, the difficulty that it describes, and that greatly embarrasses economists, of reconciling the value of labor, due to individual effort, with the value of exchange, imposed by the general needs. As to the relations between Wealth and Happiness, he judges them intimate enough: happiness resides chiefly, according to him, in activity, which has for its

*Publisher of the *Bibliothèque utile*, F. Alcan.

principal forms the acquisition of wealth and the productive employment of wealth. The question would appear undoubtedly more complex, from the psychological point of view. But we could very well content ourselves with this notion, clear and sound, of an economical happiness.

One has always pleasure in reading M. Coste, because he has just ideas, because he approaches questions of political economy as a naturalist and studies the facts in their evolution. It is the best method for understanding the subject. The deductive economists have never failed to deceive us. I would wish in the public interest for numerous readers of treatises of this kind.

* * *

Some day or other, the occasion will present itself for us to speak somewhat fully of pedagogy. Certainly, if the passion of *magister* was ever exaggerated, it is in our day, and, through logic and principles, it will become in time more difficult to make a little boy eat his porridge than to govern an empire. In all that has been done, I see some good, but much evil ; I am afraid that little artificial prodigies will in time be produced, and that we shall be given hot-house oranges instead of fine fruit ripened in full sunshine. Books follow books, and mistakes succeed mistakes. There is everywhere an embarrassment of *talents*, scarcity of *characters*. Have the causes of it been unravelled and the remedy discovered? In order to judge the results, let us wait half a century !

M. EUGENE MAILLET, whose work—*L'Education, Elements de psychologie de l'homme et de l'enfant appliquée à la pédagogie*—I have formally to announce,* will readily excuse, I hope, this quarter of an hour's bad humor. It is not from him that I take it, and his work gives evidence of too much experience, too much study, that a high value should not be placed on it. The present volume is only the first part of it ; “the second part will have for its object education itself, considered at first in its idea, then in its various forms,—physical education, education of the heart, education of the mind, education of the will and of the character, finally in the general principles of

* Belin frères, Publishers.

logic and morality which ought to dominate it and without which the rules of a wisely graduated methodology or of a rational discipline cannot be established."

In these *Elements of Psychology*, M. Maillet shows himself acquainted with new studies and methods. It is regrettable only that he does not enter into them with sufficient freedom. He has not consented to rid himself of the old terminology, he preserves the outlines almost of spiritual psychology, and appears even to seek in the affirmation of spiritualism the indispensable completion of a science of education. His work will perhaps be better welcomed for it by the university public; but we should have preferred, for our part, that he had remained less "classic," while retaining his entire freedom of criticism.

With this limitation we can recommend his work without mental reservation; some portions of it are excellent, and many readers will profit by consulting it. It is written with order, clearness, and good sense.

* * *

Here now is a curiosity, the first number of the *Annales des sciences psychiques, recueil d'observations et d'expériences*, appearing every two months, founded under the patronage of M. Charles Richet, with M. Dr. Dariex as editor.* This magazine will publish "Observations relative to so-called occult facts, *telepathy*, *lucidity*, *presentiment*, *objective apparitions*, etc." *Experiences*,—there can hardly yet be any question of them except in appearance; M. Richet so avows with good grace in a letter forming an introduction,—a very curious letter, rich in excellent advice which will perhaps not be sufficiently listened to, and with a declaration of principle which has a chance of being far too much so.

"We have the firm conviction," writes M. Richet, in effect, "that there is, mixed up with the known and described forces, forces that we do not know; that the simple, vulgar mechanical explanation will not suffice to explain all that passes around us; in a word,

* Felix Alcan, Publisher.

that there are occult psychic phenomena, and, if we say 'occult,' it is a word intended to express simply what is unknown."

What is meant here by the word forces? We are told "for three hundred years electricity was an unknown force." But it is always *occult*, as *force*; and if science is become positive, it is because it has neglected the vain entity, in order to see only a new group of empirical data, a new series of facts, that it is more or less easy to translate into unities of heat and of work. What then would forces be subtracted from mechanics, if not occult forces, with "chimerical functions"? The expression *vulgar mechanics*, does not suffice to correct the sense of the phrase and rather aggravates it, in allowing to be supposed that there exist two kinds of forces, one of which has no *measure*. But the comparison, then, is not worth anything, and it is not necessary to speak of electricity or chemical affinity in this matter.

As to the "observations," of what value are such as are presented to us? But little, after all, and many other facts will be necessary to lead us to accept the non-fortuitous relation of certain hallucinations with an objective event. Notwithstanding the wise reservations of the editor, it is to be regretted that we find already in this first number, under the title of *Une chambre hantée*, a real ghost story. Story for story, I would prefer much to read the *Chambre bleu* of Mérimée; so also, I doubt not, would M. Richet.

This little censure is not meant in jest, which would be out of place. There is always advantage in collecting *facts*, on condition that they are chosen with care, and that haste is not made to interpret them. MM. Richet and Dariex insist on this point with the greatest force. Curious readers will not be wanting for these Annals, even among sceptics. It has always been necessary to carry the lamp to cause the phantoms to vanish.*

LUCIEN ARRÉAT.

* Reference may be made to the first number of the *Revue mensuelle de l'Ecole d'Anthropologie de Paris*, published by the Professors at the *Librairie Alcan*. In this number will be found a lecture by M. André Lefèvre, under this interesting title: *Du Cri à la Parole*.